

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (previously amended): A tailgate step, comprising:

at least a first support member, the first support member having a first end and a second end, the second end of the first support member comprising a first portion of a first hinge;

at least a first step member, the first step member attached to the first end of the first support member;

at least a first support member storage channel, the first support member storage channel having a first end and a second end, at least a portion of the first support member storage channel disposed within the tailgate and operable to contain at least a portion of the first support member, the second end of the first support member channel proximate to an edge of the tailgate and comprising a second portion of the first hinge, the second portion of the first hinge including a first contact surface, the first and second portions of the first hinge pivotally engaged by a first hinge pin; and

a first step member storage channel, the first step member storage channel communicating with the first end of the first support member storage channel, at least a portion of the first step member storage channel disposed within the tailgate and operable to contain at least a portion of the first step member, the first support member and the

first step member pivoting about the first hinge between a working position and a stored position, the first support member contacting the first contact surface when the first support member and the first step member are in the working position, the first step member positioned between the tailgate and ground level when in the working position, at least a portion of the first step member disposed within the first step member channel when the first step member is in the stored position, at least a portion of the first support member disposed within the first support member channel when first support member is in the stored position.

Claim 2 (cancelled)

Claim 3 (cancelled)

Claim 4 (cancelled)

Claim 5 (cancelled)

Claim 6 (previously amended): A tailgate step as claimed in claim 1, further comprising:

a second support member, the second support member having a first end and a second end, the second end of the second support member comprising a first portion of a second hinge, the first step member attached to the second support member;

a second support member storage channel, the second support member storage channel having a first end and a second end, at least a portion of the second support member storage channel disposed within the tailgate and operable to contain at least a portion of the second support member, the first step member storage channel communicating with the first end of the second support member storage channel, the second end of the second support member channel proximate to an edge of the tailgate

and comprising a second portion of the second hinge, the second portion of the second hinge including a second contact surface, the first and second portions of the second hinge pivotally engaged by a second hinge pin; and

the second support member and the first step member pivoting about the second hinge between a working position and a stored position, the second support member contacting the second contact surface when the second support member and the first step member are in the working position, the first step member positioned between the tailgate and ground level when in the working position, at least a portion of the second support member disposed within the second support member channel when second support member is in the stored position.

Claim 7 (cancelled)

Claim 8 (cancelled)

Claim 9 (cancelled)

Claim 10 (previously added): A tailgate step as claimed in claim 1, wherein the first step member is rigidly affixed to the first support member.

Claim 11 (previously added): A tailgate step as claimed in claim 1, wherein the first support member channel and the first step member channel comprise square metal "U" channels.

Claim 12 (previously added): A tailgate step as claimed in claim 1, wherein the first contact surface is rectangular and parallel to the first support member in the working position.

Claim 13 (previously added): A tailgate step as claimed in claim 6, wherein the second support member channel comprises a square metal "U" channel.

Claim 14 (previously added): A tailgate step as claimed in claim 6, wherein the second contact surface is rectangular and parallel to the second support member in the working position.

Claim 15 (previously added): A tailgate step as claimed in claim 1, wherein protective material is affixed to upper surfaces of the first support member and the first step member, the first support member being contained within the first support member channel while in the stored position, the first step member being contained within the first step member channel while in the stored position, the protective material being substantially flush with a tailgate surface when the first support member and the first step member are in the stored position.

Claim 16 (previously added): A tailgate step as claimed in claim 6, wherein protective material is affixed to upper surfaces of the second support member, the second support member being contained within the second support member channel while in the stored position, the protective material being substantially flush with a tailgate surface when the second support member is in the stored position.